



A workshop participant discusses the Emergency Lifecycle model (Photo: WHO)

From 15 to 18 July, the Ministry of Health in Jordan, with the support of WHO, conducted a 4-day training workshop on Emergency Risk Communication. Doing so, Jordan has become the

first country in the Region to implement three components of the [Emergency Risk Communications \(ERC\) 5-step Capacity Building Package](#), which include training, capacity-mapping and plan writing. This training was part of the national efforts to strengthen the ERC capacity under International Health Regulation (IHR) and also contribute to the implementation of Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) framework. Over 30 participants from authorities in the fields of health, agriculture, civil defence, and food and drug administration attended the 4-day workshop that focused on training, capacity mapping, and plan writing. The training workshop was facilitated by risk communication experts from WHO and other partners, and the newly developed capacity-building package on ERC in five steps was used. At the end of training, the participants drafted an all-hazards national ERC plan and a specific annex plan focused on pandemic influenza, which will be taken forward and finalized by Jordan's Ministry of Health.

The training workshop built on Jordan's recognized capacity in the field of Risk Communications and Community Engagement, and connected directly to needs and gaps identified earlier assessments, including the [Joint External Evaluation \(JEE\)](#) and National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS).

Participants welcomed the opportunity to work together on finalizing a fully-fledged national ERC action plan, which connects to the ERC sections of existing strategies. The group also unanimously affirmed the value of the multisectoral collaborative work, which provided the opportunity to build a strong network of risk communication experts. The next steps for Jordan will be to finalize the draft national ERC action plan, conduct a simulation exercise to test and update it, and finally to adopt the plan into Jordan's National Emergency Response Plan and Pandemic Influenza Plan, and implement it.

The training was attended by two officials from the Ministry of Health – Dr. Nashat Yonis Ta'ani, Director of Communicable Disease and Dr. Sami Sheikh Ali, Director of Primary Health Care and WHO PIP Focal Point. During the closing ceremony, Dr Maria Cristina Profili, WHO Representative to Jordan, contextualized the importance of ERC capacity building with the recent [PHEIC](#) -declaration of the ongoing Ebola outbreak, saying: "Viruses and bacteria know no borders. Although an outbreak can be far away, it can also travel. You will all surely be contacted by media, as I have, and giving the right risk communications messages in those moments is crucial".

WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office is committed to enhance the national emergency risk communication capacity as part of IHR core capacities using a new 5 step capacity building package. In the next two years, each country of the Region should develop a

national ERC plan tailored to the local context.

Emergency [risk communication](#) (ERC) is one of the eight core functions that all Member States must fulfil as part of the [International Health Regulations](#) (IHR), and a component of preparedness within the [Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework](#).

ERC is a public health intervention required throughout the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases of a serious public health event. Its overarching goal is to mitigate adverse effects by ensuring informed decision making and encouraging protective behaviours among affected people.

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